

cancer, from heart disease, from AIDS, from diabetes. It is time to make a reality of our vision of an America in which all populations have equal opportunity to live long and healthy lives.

The Federal government has recognized this serious problem, and we have set a goal of eliminating health disparities by the end of the decade. We have taken some important first steps, including establishing a new National Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities within the National Institutes of Health. But we are halfway through the decade, and there is still much to do to prove this is not a hollow promise.

We need legislation that will clearly establish a base for building effective communication strategies and increasing awareness of health care providers and minority patients. Clinical studies should be redesigned to include more minorities. Health insurance coverage must become accessible for everyone. Our funding priorities must show our moral commitment to eradicating health and healthcare disparities.

We cannot place all the responsibility for a solution on minority Americans. Disparities are the result of problems inherent in our health care system that prevent quality care and allow disparities to persist. There are a number of factors that contribute including the lack of knowledge about how diseases can affect different races in different ways; insufficient training in medical schools; and, lack of diversity in the medical field.

Mr. Speaker, Congress and the Administration must assume the lead responsibility to achieve equality in health care. I urge you, and all of our colleagues, to join with me in supporting the Minority Health bill—soon to be reintroduced in the House and Senate and other critical initiatives to end minority health and healthcare disparities.

HONORING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF STACEY ROBINETT, REBECCA CREEK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHER OF THE YEAR

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2005

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the many accomplishments of Stacey Robinett, Rebecca Creek Elementary School Teacher of the Year.

Stacey Robinett holds both Bachelor's and Master's degrees from Texas Wesleyan University. In her 11 years of teaching, she has established herself as one of her district's leading educators.

Ms. Robinett enjoys the challenge of teaching her young students a subject which will be crucial for their future success. This is why Ms. Robinett teaches fifth-grade math for the Comal Independent School District.

Ms. Robinett says that she is motivated by belief in what she is doing, and a constant desire to improve her methods. She sees teaching as a position of trust, and is proud to be responsible for the growth and happiness of her young students.

Stacey Robinett is an exemplary educator. Her energy and commitment to her students are an example for teachers everywhere, and

a credit to the Comal Independent School District. She has accomplished a great deal already, and she has a bright future in education ahead of her. I am pleased to have the chance to recognize her accomplishments here today.

THE PENSION PRESERVATION AND SAVINGS ACT

HON. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2005

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, I have greatly enjoyed working with my good friend from Ohio, Representative ROB PORTMAN, on pension legislation for almost a decade. We have gotten good, bipartisan—even nonpartisan—legislation passed into law that has helped, and will continue to help, all Americans save for a better future.

I am very happy with the President's choice to promote (or at least move) ROB to U.S. Trade Representative, where I know he will provide an intelligent, thoughtful voice on trade. I look forward to working with him in his new capacity to provide a level playing field for U.S. workers and freer international markets for U.S. goods.

Today we introduce legislation that represents our progress on creating the next generation of Portman/Cardin pension legislation. These bills demonstrate the progress we have made and the goals we would like to pursue. I look forward to continuing this process that Congressman PORTMAN and I have started as I continue to serve here in the U.S. House of Representatives.

The bills we introduce today include a refundable, permanent savers' credit to give lower-income and younger workers more money to work with in saving for their future. We include incentives for employers to provide automatic enrollment in retirement plans to make saving easier for younger workers. We include incentives for choosing lifetime annuitant retirement, to ensure that retirement savings last a lifetime. This legislation makes permanent all of the pension improvements we made in 2001, including the availability of catch-up contributions, increased contribution limits, and increased portability of retirement savings.

The major difference between the two bills filed today is that the legislation that I have authored does not include increases to the income caps for Roth IRAs.

Once the Joint Tax Committee has scored this legislation, I intend to work with my colleagues to offer revenue offsets to mitigate any effect the enactment of this legislation could have on our budget deficit.

I want to thank my friend, ROB, for being such a good, steadfast partner in helping Americans to plan for their futures. His commitment, intelligence, and willingness to put aside politics to create the best policy have been a credit to him and have made a difference in the lives of countless Americans.

CHILD INTERSTATE ABORTION NOTIFICATION ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 27, 2005

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to applaud the House for the passage of H.R. 748, the Child Interstate Notification Act, sponsored by my colleague from Florida Congresswoman ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN. This important legislation prohibits the transportation of a minor across state lines to obtain an abortion for the sole purpose of avoiding parental consent laws.

It is a tragedy to deny parents the ability to consult with their child at the most critical time. It is a parent who can provide the emotional and psychological support that their daughter will need. Additionally, parents know their daughter's medical history. They know any allergies that she may have to certain medications or anesthesia. In an era when a child must seek parental consent to receive aspirin from school officials, it seems reasonable to expect that a child seek that same consent to obtain a major medical procedure.

Mr. Speaker, I come from a state that requires parental notification. Yet out of state clinics are constantly trying to circumvent our parental notification laws. It is not an uncommon practice for clinics in New Jersey, a state without parental notification laws, to advertise in Pennsylvania phone books. In fact, these clinics will go as far as to highlight the fact that they will perform abortions without parental notification. The passage of the Child Interstate Notification Act will effectively put an end to this atrocious practice.

Also, it should be noted that in no way does passage H.R. 748 interfere with or supercede existing state law. This bill simply deals with the interstate transporting of minors. As a parent of two children, I appreciate that the passage of this legislation will ensure that children will not be transported across state lines to circumvent state law.

CONGRATULATING MR. AND MRS. ALAN AND JOAN HURST ON THE OCCASION OF THEIR 50TH WED- DING ANNIVERSARY

HON. JUDY BIGGERT

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2005

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor my dear friends, Alan and Joan Hurst of Hinsdale, Illinois, on the occasion of their 50th wedding anniversary. In June, the Hursts will celebrate 50 years of marriage, and I would like to take a moment to congratulate them on this special event.

My husband Rody and I have known Alan and Joan for almost 35 years—as neighbors and as friends. When we first moved to our home town of Hinsdale, Illinois, they welcomed us into the community with open arms and open hearts. Together, we have enjoyed many years of friendship, including countless dinners, celebrations and family vacations.

The Hursts have been blessed with three children and eight beautiful grandchildren.